

News Bulletin

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SAMHSA now accepting nominations for 2012 Voice Awards

National award program calls for nominations of community leaders and TV and film screenwriters and producers who raise awareness and promote recovery from mental health and/or substance use disorders

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) is now accepting nominations for its 2012 Voice Awards. The Awards honor leaders in the field of behavioral health, as well as leaders in the entertainment industry, who play a vital role in educating the public about the real and uplifting experiences of people in recovery. This year's winners will be recognized at an awards ceremony at Paramount Studios in Hollywood, Calif. on Wednesday, August 22.

Now in its seventh year, the Voice Awards honors behavioral health advocates and the entertainment industry for demonstrating through their work that people can and do recover from these conditions and lead full and meaningful lives in their communities. Nominees are reviewed by a panel of judges that includes TV and film writers and producers, consumer/peer leaders, and advocacy organizations, as well as representatives from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and other Voice Awards program partners.

Eligible consumer/peer leaders must have led efforts to promote the social inclusion of people with behavioral health problems, personally demonstrated that recovery is real and possible, and made a positive impact on his/her community, workplace, or school. Eligible entertainment productions must contain a positive behavioral health storyline that incorporates dignified, respectful, and accurate portrayals of people with behavioral health challenges, and must have been released after April 15, 2011.

Each year, the Voice Awards also feature a theme supporting SAMHSA's key strategic initiatives; the theme is integrated throughout all facets of the year's program. In 2012, the awards program will spotlight the strength and perseverance of athletes who face unique challenges in managing mental health and/or substance use disorders, while continuing to train, compete, and remain in the public eye. Consideration is being given to consumer/peer leaders who educate the public about the behavioral health challenges of athletes and help empower them to begin a journey of recovery. Additional consideration is being given to TV and film

productions that accurately and respectfully portray the behavioral health struggles of athletes, their resilience, and their paths to recovery.

To submit 2012 Voice Awards nominations, visit www.voiceawards.samhsa.gov. All consumer/peer leader nominations must be submitted by **Friday, March 30, 2012**, and all entertainment nominations must be submitted by **Friday, April 27, 2012**, to be considered. Nominations are open to all and submission is free. There is no limit to the number of nominations an individual can submit. Self-nominations are welcome.

For more information on the Voice Awards, visit www.voiceawards.samhsa.gov. For event updates, follow @samhsagov on Twitter and/or visit www.facebook.com/samhsa on Facebook. For more information about SAMHSA visit: <http://www.samhsa.gov>.

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